# Pinner Aikido Club

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Aikido Pamphlet

# An introduction to Aikido

#### A more detailed look at Aikido cont...

It can be argued that Aikido is based on the swordsman's art, which is certainly true to a large degree; but do not forget there is a much wider philosophy involved. Many of the movements are indeed based on sword 'cuts' and this in turn will teach us how to make best use of centralised body movement, but it is wise to keep an open mind regarding 'how' you learn.

It is at this point that the idea of using bokken and jo as an integral part of Aikido development can be introduced. Ueshiba encouraged the use of these two 'weapons' to be adopted within Aikido, although bear in mind that they can be regarded as disciplines in their own right.

If this martial art appeals to you, remember this huge diversity within Aikido that can help you and your development. That is after all primarily what O-Sensei wished for and encouraged within his teachings.

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#### Morehei Uyeshiba (1883-1969)

Aikido is a relatively new self-defence art, founded in Japan by Master Morehei Uyeshiba.

As a youth Uyeshiba Sensei, or O-Sensei (great teacher) as he was later called, applied himself to many arduous years of training in 'budo' or the Japanese martial arts. He mastered jiu-jitsu, the use of the spear and the staff and enjoyed a reputation as unbeatable with the sword.

O-Sensei also delved deeply into religion, studying Zen Buddhism and the Shinto religion. Although he became very strong and won many matches, he was troubled with the idea that winning at someone else's expense was not really winning. He came to realise that true self-defence is not winning over others, but winning over the discord within oneself.

Though he was an acknowledged master, he began to practise movements, exploring them deeply, searching mentally, and sitting for long hours in meditation. As a result, Aikido was born, as a way to divert harm from one's self while not inflicting permanent injury on an aggressor.

As Aikido developed, it became clear that it was not only an effective means of self-defence, but also a way to interpret life through the study of the energy flow of the universe

# The meaning of the word 'Aikido'

Aikido in Japanese is made up of three characters or kanji. The first and most important is 'AI' which means 'to meet, come together and harmonise'. The second kanji is 'KI' which means 'the spirit (of the universe) or soul'. The third or last character is 'DO' which means 'the way or path', as in Kendo or Judo, to signify that the study of Aikido does not involve only self-defence techniques but includes positive character-building ideals which a person can incorporate into his or her daily life.

#### The philosophy behind Aikido

The most unusual aspect of Aikido is that although it is primarily a self defence art, it takes as the basis of its philosophy the idea of being in harmony with the opponent rather than being in conflict. The ideology behind Aikido is not to think of defeating the enemy but rather to be in harmony with him, spiritually and physically.

This is why Aikido is sometimes called the 'art of non resistance' or the 'non fighting martial art'.

Aikido is more than an art of self-defence. Into it are woven elements of philosophy, psychology and dynamics. As one learns the various techniques one will at the same time train one's mind, improve one's health and develop self-confidence. Through the physical practice of the self-defence techniques the student comes to appreciate and understand the mental and spiritual aspect of Aikido. During the practice sessions, partners work out in harmony with each other, learning when and how to yield, how to lead and guide another person's movements and how to down an opponent through non-aggressive techniques.

#### Aikido movements and techniques

The movements of Aikido emphasise a flowing flexibility and the maintaining of balance. The aim of the aikidoka is to be in complete control of his or her mind and body, and to maintain a calm, alert posture. The continuous and flexible motion, which originates at the waist, is like the performance of a dance; a graceful spherical motion. Much of the beauty of Aikido derives from the coordinated motion of the entire body, with each movement of a part of the body contributing to the integrated sequence of movements.

Most of the joint techniques, such as those applied to the wrist or elbow, flex the joints in the direction of natural bending. They are in harmony with natural flexing, and although such techniques are painful and effective if resisted against, they result in no permanent joint damage.

#### A more detailed look at Aikido

Aikido has, in a similar manner to other martial arts, developed and evolved even further from its original roots but still retains the concepts necessary to form its basic starting point.

There are many schools of Aikido and many schools of thought each stressing their own emphasis of what they believe is important to the practice of Aikido. The subsequent diversity, which occurred within the art of Aikido, was inevitable; and it is widely believed Ueshiba himself would have welcomed this.

Some of the 'original' students that studied under Ueshiba have gone on to form their own distinctive styles within Aikido, which can be referred to in their own right.

## 'Types' of Aikido

The teachings of the four main categories below reflect examples of these differences, at least in their early stages. These are Ki Aikido, Tomiki, Traditional and Yoshinkan.

Ki Aikido, founded by Tohei sensei, has an emphasis on the development of internal energy through controlled breathing and harmonising exercises. It has been described as 'soft' Aikido.

Tomiki Aikido focuses on competition sparring and kata, it therefore excludes some techniques that would easily cause injury. Perhaps it would be fair to say that it has evolved to cater for the 'sporting and competitive' element.

Traditional Aikido basically tries to adhere to that of Uyeshiba's teachings. Many organisations claim to practice Traditional Aikido, amongst them are the British Aikido Federation, the Kai Shin Kai and the United Kingdom Aikikai.

Yoshinkan Aikido, founded by Shioda sensei, is one of the oldest styles of Aikido and has a more rigid approach to basic training. This stemmed from necessity when it was first taught to the military/ police, which involved large numbers of students. It concentrates more on effective blocking and striking in a linear movement and less on circular blending movements.

# **Dojo Etiquette**

When entering the dojo, traditionally students perform a ritsurei (standing bow) towards the shomen (picture of O-Sensei or 'the head' or top part of the dojo), as a mark of respect.

Before going onto the tatami (mat), ensure that your keikogi (gi) and obi (belt) are tied properly. Approach the tatami, remove zori (sandals) and bow towards the shomen.

To perform a kneeling bow (rei), place the left hand then the right on the tatami in front of you so that the two thumbs and index fingers form a triangle.

When the sensei (instructor) enters the dojo and before he comes onto the tatami all members should line up in the sitting position.

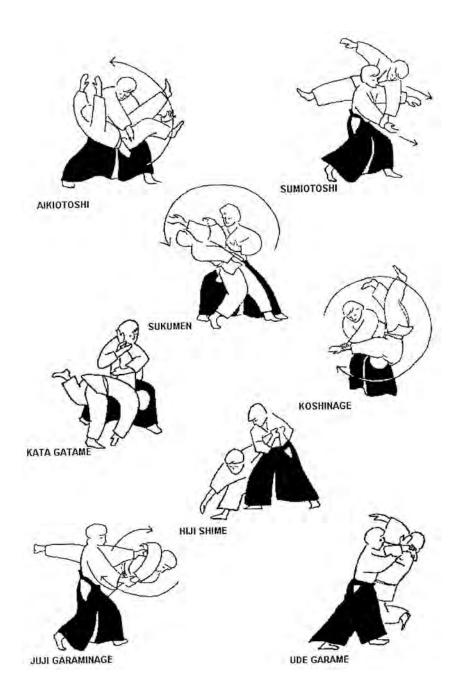
At the start of the class all bow with sensei towards the shomen, then return sensei's bow with the 'traditional' phrase 'Onegaishimasu'. Ideally, follow his lead through the warming-up exercises.

During class, ritsurei to your partner before and after practising. If sensei should instruct you and your partner individually, it is polite to bow afterwards. While the sensei is working with your partner you may kneel on the tatami.

Your partners are not your opponents, so take care of them whenever possible. Be sensitive to their abilities and remember that the understanding of Aikido's principles and techniques can be learnt whilst receiving and applying them; both as an uki <u>and</u> as tori.

When arriving late or leaving early, wait at the side of the tatami and then ask sensei's permission to join the class. If leaving early, ask sensei's permission first. Basic polite behaviour really!

At the end of the lesson, follow sensei's lead as for starting the class. When returning the bow it is polite to say 'domo arigato gozaimashita'. Allow sensei to leave the mat first.



# Glossary of Japanese terms used in Aikido

**Ai** principle of harmony with others

Arigato gozaimasu

thank you (very polite)

Bokkenwooden practice swordBudo/bushidocode of the SamuraiDame'don't do that', incorrectDanblack belt ranking

**Domo arigato** thank you **Domo arigato gozaimashita** 

thank you very much; directed at sensei at the end of the class,

referring to everything that he has taught

Dojo training hall Gi (keikogi) practice suit

Hakama divided skirt worn over the gi

Hanmi posture/stance

Hara your centre (physical and spiritual), lower abdomen

Hidari left

Hijime start or begin Irimi entering Kamae ready posture

**Kamiza** a small shrine, often at the head of a dojo

Kata set form of movements
Keiza sitting, but up on toes

**Ki** spirit or energy

Ki no nagare as a flowing movement

Kokyu 'breath power', co-ordination of ki and breathing

**Kyu** a rank below dan grade

Ma ai correct distance between partners

Migi right

**Mushin** 'No mind'; state of awareness characterised by the

absence of distinctive thought

Omote front, moving in front / forward

**Ritsurei** standing bow **Sempae** senior student















# SANKYO





# Glossary of Japanese terms cont...

Sensei instructor / teacher
Seiza sitting posture
Tatami training mat

**Tegatana** handblade, the side of the hand

**Tenkan** turning

**Ura** rear, moving behind / rear

Yame stop, cease practice

Yudansha black belt holder (any rank)
Zanshin awareness, concentration

**Zazen** meditation

**Zori** sandals for your feet

# **Counting**

Ichi = 1 Roku = 6 Jyu = 10 Jyu-ichi (10 + 1 = 11) etc.

Ni = 2 Shichi = 7 Ni Jyu = 20 Ni-jyu-ichi (2 x 10 +1 = 21) etc.

San = 3 Hachi = 8 San-Jvu = 30 San-jvu-roku (36) etc.

Shi = 4 Kyu = 9 Hyaku = 100

 $G_0 = 5$ 

#### Basic exercises (Aiki taiso)

Ayumi ashi crossed step walking, in front or behind foot

**Irimi tenkan** entering move then turning outwards

Mai ukemi forward break-fall

**Shihogeri** four direction cut, basic sword movement

Shikko knee walking Taisabaki body movement

**Torifune** boat-rowing style of exercise using kiai

Tsugi ashi forwards or backwards adjustment or follow up step

Ushiro ukemi backward break-fall

# Glossary of Japanese terms cont...

# **Partner exercises**

Hi shin undo back stretch

Kokyu ho extending power, breathing out Suwariwaza kokyu ho exercise as above but sitting Tai no henko blending tenkan exercise



**Tachi waza** performed with tori and uke standing **Suwari waza** performed with tori and uke sitting

Hanmihandachi waza performed with tori sitting and uke standing

**Ai hanmi** basic posture, partners in same stance

**Atemi waza** striking / hitting techniques

Gyaku hanmi basic posture, partners in reverse stance

Kansetsu waza joint manipulation techniques

Katame waza hold down techniques

Nage waza projection/throwing techniques

Osae waza pinning techniques

**Ushiro waza** 'from the rear' techniques

It is important that students understand and can demonstrate in a grading the differences expected from irimi and tenkan variations.

Irimi (or omote) entering across the front of your partner from hidari

hanmi (left) or migi hanmi (right)

**Tenkan** (or ura) turning to the outside (rear) of your partner from hidari

or migi hanmi

A more subtle interpretation of omote and ura will come later, perhaps!



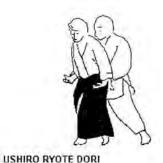












**USHIRO RYO KATA DORI** 





# Glossary of Japanese terms cont...

# **Basic holds (Grip attacks)**

Ai katate dori grip wrist same side Katatedori grip wrist same side

Gyaku katatedori grip wrist reverse or opposite side

Kousadorigrip wrist opposite sideHiji dorigrab the sleeve or elbowKata dorigrab the shoulder area

Morote dorigrab or grip wrist with both handsMune dorigrip or grab lapel or mid chest area

Ryo kata dori hold / take both shoulders
Ryote dori two hands take both wrists
Ryo katate dori two hands take both wrists

#### Advanced holds (Grip attacks)

**Kubishime** to strangle or choke **Munedakishime** bear hug (from behind)

**Ushiro** from the rear (usually prefix to attack)

**Ushiro eri dori** collar gripped from behind

Ushiro katate

dori kubishime a neck choke from behind using one hand with the other

hand holding the wrist

Ushiro ryote dori
Ushiro ryo hiji dori
Ushiro ryo kata dori
both wrists gripped from behind
both elbows gripped from behind
both shoulders gripped from behind

# Basic Strikes (Atemi waza)

Tsuki punch or strike to body
Chudan tsuki punch to stomach
Gedan tsuki punch to groin
Jodan tsuki punch to head

**Shomenuchi** strike to the top of the head

Yokomenuchi strike to side of head

# Glossary of Japanese terms cont...

# **Techniques performed by tori**

**Ikkyo** first principle – pinning technique

Nikkyo second principle
Sankyo third principle
Yonkyo fourth principle
Gokyo fifth principle

Hijishime sixth principle (elbow lock against joint)

Aiki otoshi body drop Aikinage harmony throw

Iriminage entering throw (body)

Jyujigarame crossed elbow throw

**Kaitennage** a rotary throw. N.B. Variation to be initiated

(Soto and Uchi) from the outside and from the inside (under)

**Katagatame** shoulder lock and throw

**Kokyunage** breath throw

**Koshinage** a throw in which uke is thrown over tori's hips **Kotegaeshi** wrist (technique using outward turn to) throw

Shihonage four directional throw underhead breath throw corner throw (drop)

Tenchinage heaven and earth throw

Udegarami elbow lock and throw (figure four lock)

## Advanced strikes

**Giri** kick (jodan, chudan, gedan)

Gyaku yokogiri a roundhouse kick

Gyaku yokomenuchi reverse strike to side of head

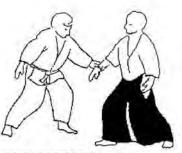
Katadori shomenuchi grab and strike

**Shomenate** rising strike to head (throat)

# Pictograms of Attacks and Techniques







**GYAKU KATATE DORI** 











# Kai Shin Kai senior grading syllabus cont...

# Shodan (Black belt) – min. 200 hours & 1 year from 1st kyu

- i) Selected techniques from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> kyu syllabi, plus additional requirements as detailed in the test paper.
- ii) Escape from being held by two ukes using Morote dori.
- iii) Defences against weapons: Bokken, Chain, Jo, or Tanto.
- iv) Futari gaeki, a more spirited attack, against two ukes, or

Weapons: Bokken kumitachi and Kumijo.

## Nidan - minimum of two years from shodan

- i) Similar techniques as in Shodan but to a higher standard of execution and understanding. Particular attention will be paid to posture, blending, control, zanshin and mushin.
- ii) Choice of own six techniques to higher standard.
- iii) Escape from being held by three ukes, two gripping, one punching or kicking.
- iv) Futari gaeki with one attacker armed with a tanto,

Weapons: Bokken kumitachi, Kumijo, Ken tai jo.

# Sandan – minimum of three years from nidan

As above, but to a higher standard. The examination panel would expect to see progression and individual improvement since nidan.

# Yondan and above

Currently these gradings are by recommendation and invitation only.

# Glossary of Japanese terms cont...

#### Other elements

Ninnin dori Practise with two ukes against named attacks
Sannin dori Practise with three ukes against named attacks

**Jiyu waza** Free-style techniques

**Randori** Multi person random choice of attacks

**Tanto dori** Defences against a knife (tanto) **Tachi dori** Defences against a sword (bokken)

Jo dori Defences against a jo (staff)

#### Weapons

The use and handling of weapons, particularly the bokken and jo, forms an adjunct to a student's comprehension and understanding of the principles in Aikido.

**Bokken suburi** 7 basic sword cuts

**Bokken awase** Partner blending practice

Kumitachi (bokken) Advanced exercises with swords

**Jo suburi** 20 basic jo movements

Jo kata Kata (e.g. 13, 22, 31 & 25 count forms)

Kumijo Advanced exercises with jo partner

Ken tai jo Bokken against jo practice

Demonstration of the bokken and jo is an optional part of the senior gradings, instead of ninnin dori or futari gaeki.

# Kai Shin Kai senior grading syllabus

#### 5th kyu (Yellow belt) – minimum 30 hours of training

- Selection of exercises from:
   Taisabaki, Tsugi ashi, Ayumi ashi, Torifune, Tai no henko, Ukemi,
  - Shikko, Suwari waza kokyu ho.
- ii) Techniques from Ai katate dori (irimi and tenkan): Ikkyo, Nikkyo, Iriminage, Kotegaeshi.
- iii) Ninnin dori using Ai katatedori.

# 4th kyu (Orange belt) – minimum 60 hours from 5th kyu

- i) Selected attacks from 5<sup>th</sup> kyu syllabus.
- ii) Plus techniques from:

Ai katate dori, Chudan tsuki, Gyaku katate dori, Shomenuchi, Yokumenuchi.

Attacks leading into Ikkyo, Nikkyo, Iriminage, Kokyunage, Kotegaeshi, Sukumen, Shihonage, Tenchinage, Sumi otoshi, plus others as requested.

iii) Ninnin dori using above attacks,

OY

Weapons: Bokken suburi: nos. 1-4. Jo suburi: nos. 1-5.

#### 3<sup>rd</sup> kyu (Green belt) – minimum 60 hours from 4<sup>th</sup> kyu

- i) Selected techniques from 5<sup>th</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> kyu syllabi.
- ii) Plus techniques from:

Kata dori, Kata dori shomenuchi, Ryote dori, Ushiro ryote dori, Ushiro ryo kata dori.

Attacks are to lead into Sankyo, Yonkyo, Mai otoshi, plus others as requested.

iii) Ninnin dori using above attacks,

or

Weapons: demonstrating Bokken suburi and Jo suburi.

# Kai Shin Kai senior grading syllabus cont...

# 2<sup>nd</sup> kyu (Blue belt) – minimum 70 hours from 3<sup>rd</sup> kyu

- i) Selected techniques from 5<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> kyu syllabi.
- ii) Plus techniques from:
  Hiji dori, Ushiro hiji dori, Jodan tsuki, Morote dori.
  Attacks are to lead into Gokyo, Hijishime, Kaitennage, plus others as requested.
- iii) Don't forget Hanmi handachi and Suwari waza variations!
- iv) Escape from being held by two ukes using Morote dori.
- v) Ninnin dori using above attacks, *or*

Weapons: demonstrating Bokken awase and Jo suburi kata.

#### 1st kyu (Brown belt) – minimum 100 hours from 2nd kyu

- i) Selected techniques from the 5<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> kyu syllabi as detailed in the relevant test papers.
- ii) Tanto dori.
- iii) Escape from being held by two ukes using Morote dori.
- iv) Ninnin dori with free attacks from ukes,

or

Weapons: demonstrating Bokken awase (Ki musubi no-ken) and Jo kata.

# **Senior gradings**

The 1<sup>st</sup> kyu to sandan gradings are usually held in April and October. They have separate, specific test papers issued which cover the KSK syllabus and are judged by an appropriately qualified panel.

Test requirements can be a sensitive issue. Interpret these as guidelines not requirements, thus allowing a panel some discretion, some humanity, even some mistakes. Your Aikido will not have changed!